

Open House at Harris County Courthouse

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By Joan Drammeh, Community Involvement Coordinator

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More than 50 residents attended the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Open House held at the Harris County Courthouse in Houston, Texas, Dec. 11, 2014. The meeting addressed cleanup actions taken by the EPA at the abandoned hazardous waste site CES Environmental Services Inc. Concerned parties in attendance included representatives from the Texas Organizing Project, Houston City Council District D, MacGregor Park Civic Club, and Behling & Wheeler, LLC.

"It was a good meeting and a lot of people showed up but next time we need answers," said (b) (6) whose property is adjacent the former chemical recycling facility.

"Gary Moore and Bill Little have been working so hard for us but we need to know what is going to happen when the cleanup is finished and they leave the site."

On-Scene Coordinator Gary Moore described the removal process, sampling procedures, and the logistics of transporting the various contaminants. With multiple maps and color coded layouts of the site, Moore detailed the various vats, roll-off boxes, frac tanks, and above ground storage containers that still need to be cleaned.

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“During the course of operations at CES, there were multiple complaints concerning odors emanating from the facility and that is why we are here,” said Moore. “CES left a lot of waste when they went bankrupt in 2010 and my job is to remove the chemicals that were left in tanks and containers.”

Personnel from Texas Department of State Health Services, City of Houston, and the Houston Housing Authority assisted with questions ranging from the air and water quality to zoning laws. Community leaders requested increased communication efforts from the Community Involvement Team and another meeting before March 2015.

